



Gordon Hopkins

Partner/Corporate Executive Chef

Before joining forces with James Beard Award winning chef/owner Roy Yamaguchi in his original Roy's Restaurant in Honolulu in 1988, Gordon Hopkins honed his craft through 18 years of labor in classic French kitchens in his home in Honolulu (most notably as Executive Chef of Michel's in the Colony Surf from 1977 to 1987), bolstered by working visits in restaurants in San Francisco, L.A., Chicago, New Orleans and New York City.

Although carrying the title of corporate chef and partner of Roy Yamaguchi's enterprises, Hopkins' role has been the actual execution of Yamaguchi's famed Hawaiian Fusion cuisine, and the guiding force behind the 25 or so "chefs' specials" featured each night at the flagship Roy's Restaurants. This has always been where it starts for Roy's – Hopkins' and Yamaguchi's astonishing array of French style sauces and Asian seasonings applied to six to eight fresh island fish, dim sum and Mediterranean style appetizers, local farm raised salads and vegetables beds, wood oven pizza, and the use of the freshest foodstuffs the Pacific Rim has to give.

This is the style of cooking that, barely four months after Roy's first opened, Honolulu magazine boldly predicted would play a "pivotal role in the creation of a true contemporary Hawaii cuisine – that blend of East and West and Polynesia long expected and slow arriving."

And it has arrived. Few would dispute the fact that the energy generated in Roy's exhibition kitchen struck the decisive spark leading to the new Hawaii Regional Cuisine, and the ripples that have been sent clear across the U.S. and to Asia. Says Yamaguchi, "Gordon personally trains all of Roy's executive chefs. More than a teacher of technique, what Gordon injects into everyone's blood is that passion – the willingness to dream, and then wake up and work like hell to accomplish it. That's the way our kitchens function; and none of this would have happened the way we wanted it without Gordon's fire, his sheer force of will."

Over the past eight-plus years, Gordon's high energy kitchen has also been something of a magnet for celebrity guest chefs ranging from Paul Bocuse to Madeline Kamman, and James Beard Award winners such as Joachim Splichal, Mark Miller, Jeremiah Tower, Nobu Matsuhisa, Traci Des Jardins, and Bradley Ogden. Hopkins' own peregrinations as a guest chef have recently taken him to kitchens lit up with equally brilliant culinary flair – such as Spago, Chinois on Main, Citrus and Ca'Brea.

As Yamaguchi once was quoted, "We start each day as if we have to prove ourselves all over again...we're constantly in search of new ideas." And if this hasn't been proven by the accolades – Hawaii's highest ranking in Gaut-Millau, "Top 50" ratings in Forbes and Conde Nast Traveler, the cover of Bon Appetit, and a coveted place in Nation's Restaurant News' "Fine Dining Hall of Fame" – nearly any taste of Hopkins' and Yamaguchi's side-by-side labors on any given night in Honolulu always serves to seal it.